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Shrimp farming another example of wasted money

Sunday, April 03, 2005

It's bad enough that Kentucky's politicians bred and produced pork at record levels during the 2005 General Assembly. Now, they're getting into the shrimp business!

Legislators slipped \$2.8 million into the budget to research shrimp-breeding techniques in Kentucky. Most of this funding will benefit Sygen, a private company in Franklin that already conducts its own shrimp research.

Legislators who are more interested in the next election than in making good spending decisions claim the funds will spawn economic development. Yet, the expenditure amounts to little more than politicians offering preferential treatment to companies they think will succeed.

State Sen. Ritchie Sanders, R-Franklin, claims the effort will spur Kentucky's lagging agricultural industry. Such an idea is fishy, at best.

The Washington Times reported last year that 70 percent of all shrimp consumed in the United States is imported from other countries. There is a reason why – lower prices.



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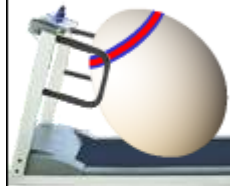
Sanders also claims that shrimp is a major contributor to the trade deficit. The reason is that conditions in Kentucky and many other states are not hospitable to producing a lot of shrimp. America buys shrimp from other countries because they have an abundant supply.

Does Sen. Sanders really expect farmers who had grown tobacco all of their life to invest a significant amount of money to build facilities to farm shrimp? As Spock would say, "This is highly illogical."

Joel Peyton

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